



## Policy Roundtable for Child Care

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### **MEETING MINUTES**

**October 14, 2009**

**10:00 a.m. – noon**

**Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration**

**500 West Temple Avenue, Conference Room 344**

**Los Angeles, California 90012**

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#### **1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Ms. Terri Chew Nishimura, Chair of the Policy Roundtable for Child Care (Roundtable), opened the meeting at 10:05 a.m. Members and guests were welcomed and invited to introduce themselves.

##### **a. Comments from the Chair**

Ms. Nishimura attended the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) Head Start 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. She acknowledged Mr. Whit Hayslip's contribution as the Master of Ceremonies and recognized the attendance of other Roundtable members. When she asked how many people were familiar with the Steps to Excellence Project (STEP), only a few hands were raised of the 200 in attendance. Ms. Nishimura takes this as a charge that efforts need to be accelerated to raise awareness. Ms. Sarah Younglove added her appreciation for the participation of Roundtable members at this event that also served as a kick-off for LACOE Head Start's goal of collaboration.

Next, Ms. Nishimura directed members to their meeting packets for the list of Roundtable Committees. A master sign up list was circulated during the meeting. Ms. Nishimura encouraged all members to serve on at least one committee.

The November meeting scheduled for November 11, 2009 falls on Veteran's Day, a holiday observed by the County. *Ms. Arlene Rhine moved to reschedule the meeting to Thursday, November 12, 2009 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Ms. Maria Calix seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

##### **b. Review of Minutes**

- September 9, 2009

*Ms. Rhine made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Younglove seconded the motion. The minutes were approved on a unanimous vote.*

## 2. POLICY FRAMEWORK OBJECTIVE

*Increase the consistent use of high quality child development services for DCFS clients 0 to 5.*

Ms. Nishimura reminded members that each month a significant portion of the meeting would be devoted to in-depth conversations on specific items of the framework. This month is a joint presentation by Ms. Maryam Fatima and Ms. Norma Doctor Sparks, Deputy Directors with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Ms. Jennifer Hottenroth, Assistant Division Chief, and Mr. Steve Sturm representing the Education and Mentoring Division of DCFS, and, from LACOE Head Start, Ms. Younglove and Ms. Mary Picone.

### **a. Establishing a policy on the utilization of high quality child development services for DCFS clients.**

Ms. Fatima provided as a backdrop for her presentation a bit of her history with DCFS. She has been an employee of DCFS for 25 years. Before her promotion to Deputy Director, Ms. Fatima was the Regional Administrator at the Pomona office. While she has grown to appreciate the importance of education and child development services to the well-being of children and their success, it was meetings with Dr. Jacquelyn McCroskey and Ms. Terry Ogawa and their promotion of work around education that helped her set it as a priority. Ms. Fatima added that she has been particularly concerned about the disproportionality among African-American children in the child welfare system. She believes it is critical that the Department buy into early education and champion it. She pointed to the fact that other child protective services programs use early care and education to improve the quality of lives for children and their families. She listed the benefits of enrolling children in high quality programs as preparing them for school, identifying developmental delays, and providing early intervention services. She added that by enrolling children in early care and education programs, their safety net has been expanded. Furthermore, many programs help link families to other community resources and services.

Ms. Fatima expressed urgency for the development of a Department policy on connecting children and families to early care and education services. With 10,800 children five years old and under in the system - 60% are in out of home care living in foster homes or with legal guardians, 40% are in the home of their parent, 800 are in adoptive homes – it is important that they receive services. Efforts need to start at top of the DCFS hierarchy, so Ms. Fatima is in beginning conversations with the Executive team to elevate the importance of early care and education and build consensus. Reflecting on the history of DCFS, Ms. Fatima stated that for many years the focus was on safety, and then transitioned to permanency. Recent discussions are focused on overall well-being of which early care and education is consistent. Ms. Fatima also stressed the need internally to educate DCFS staff on the value of early care and education, inform them of the resources, and educate them on how to navigate the system. Ms. Fatima wants early care and education to become part of the case plan. Ms. Fatima asked to return to the Roundtable after more internal focus to solicit input and guidance, stating that the Roundtable will be essential to implementing the plan.

By way of introducing Ms. Sparks, Ms. Fatima mentioned an initiative underway with LACOE in collaboration with the Lakewood and Pomona DCFS offices. Ms. Sparks is using her work in Santa Clara County to help inform their work in Los Angeles County.

Ms. Sparks said efforts are focused on integration and coordination to enhance a seamlessness of services. Santa Clara County assumed an urgency to ensure that children were enrolled in enriched child development programs, such as Early Head Start and Head Start. A couple of

years ago, their child welfare system facilitated referrals to Head Start, where children receive priority for admission. The partnership, which also included their local First 5, increased participation by child welfare families and their knowledge regarding the benefits of early education for children. Ms. Sparks added that one of the benefits they considered important was Head Start helping families navigate other community resources. While she is new to Los Angeles County as of May, Ms. Sparks also senses the urgency to move as many children as possible into early care and education programs and maximize the County's child care dollars by exploring how to augment half day programs to create a full day of services, one of several models to explore. Ms. Fatima echoed Ms. Sparks comment regarding maximizing the Department's resources, adding that DCFS has budgeted \$17 million for early care and education. She also recognized the education team for their help in forwarding messages relating to the importance of early care and education.

Dr. McCroskey suggested exploring the inter-university consortium and their curriculum for DCFS Children's Social Workers (CSWs), using the Roundtable to help develop the training curriculum. Ms. Fatima replied that they are looking at educating existing staff and integrating trainings into the academy. Several members commended and thanked Ms. Sparks and Ms. Fatima for their leadership in this area and offered the support of Roundtable, suggesting that they consider including the Office of Child Care in the actual upfront planning. Mr. Dennis added that the need is reciprocal in that early care and education programs are in need of good social work practice, particularly with vulnerable populations. Mr. Whit Hayslip commented that too often children in the child welfare system are referred to special education when they could use good quality early care and education. Ms. Fatima agreed and said that it makes sense to make sure the education system understands foster children should not automatically be referred to special education. Ms. Holly Reynolds offered comments in general on the early care and education field. She referred to longitudinal studies documenting the cost benefits of children participating in high quality programs. The outcomes were the result of intentional coordinated efforts between early care and education programs and community services where services were coordinated for those children most at risk.

#### **b. Building partnerships and first effort to enroll foster children in Head Start**

Ms. Younglove described Head Start as a comprehensive program that provides families with connections to a multitude of quality services. As such, Head Start needs to be a collaborative partner. Foster children and homeless children have been established as a priority at national level; LACOE Head Start adopted the same priority for expansion. Ms. Younglove acknowledged Ms. Ogawa for suggesting they work closely with DCFS. Shortly thereafter, conversations were initiated with DCFS and the Santa Clara County model was introduced by Ms. Sparks. Ms. Younglove then turned the presentation over to Mr. Sturm and Ms. Picone.

Mr. Sturm, using a PowerPoint, provided background on the value of quality early care and education and its potential impact on DCFS children. Next, he described the newly launched 'Pomona and El Monte DCFS Head Start Enrollment Project'. DCFS identified 190 three and four year old children for potential enrollment in Head Start. The CSWs discussed the Head Start options with families during their home visits and requested consent to enroll the children. Applications were completed on behalf of children for whom they received consent and sent via facsimile to Head Start. Applications were forwarded to the appropriate delegate agency serving the family's area; the delegate agency scheduled the appointment and enrolled the child as space allowed.

Of the 190 children identified, DCFS learned that 97 were already enrolled in some type of early care and education program, including family child care homes, child development centers, Head Start, or with a family, friend or neighbor. Four families declined enrollment, while 58 families consented to enrolling the children. To date, 15 children have been enrolled.

Mr. Sturm talked about efforts to reach additional families, increase enrollments in Head Start, and expand to other service areas beginning with Long Beach as well as helping families connect to other program types, such as the California State Preschool Programs, Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP), and others. He also offered ways in which DCFS can better integrate connecting families to early care and education programs into daily case management activities and track their enrollment on the DCFS database system.

The presentation provoked the following discussion points:

- What happens when the Head Start to which the family is referred is full? The family may be placed on the waiting list or referred to another delegate agency or grantee. It was suggested that families also be referred to their local Child Care Resource and Referral (R&R) Agency so that they may be connected to other programs.
- Dr. Celia Ayala raised efforts undertaken by LAUP to target children in the foster care system. She offered to share the results of their work with Head Start and DCFS.
- The focus to date has been on three to four year old children. The importance of reaching children birth to three years old was stressed. Efforts in Long Beach will focus on children from birth to five years old. DCFS is encouraged to enroll young children in Early Head Start.
- Mr. Hayslip announced that American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds will support expansion of Los Angeles Unified School District's (LAUSD) Head Start services in South Los Angeles. They will have 312 openings and can provide information on the available spaces by zip code to help facilitate the enrollment of foster and homeless children.
- Mr. Richard Cohen mentioned that efforts underway could help DCFS meet their CAPTA (Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act) requirement as children enrolled in Early Head Start and Head Start receive developmental screenings.
- Streamline processes to help enroll children into Head Start, State Preschool, LAUP, and other programs. In addition, look at how to stack programs to provide full day services to families. The idea is to make sure that children are not just being enrolled in programs, but good, solid programs. The Office of Child Care is available to participate in the planning as the effort moves forward.

### **c. Community Stakeholders**

Ms. Nishimura commented on her excitement at being involved in early planning to ensure that children and families are being connected to quality programs. In addition to facilitating children's enrollment, the conversation focused on building the capacity of the early care and education field to serve the DCFS children. She then introduced Dr. Carrie Miller. Dr. Miller talked about establishing baseline data to learn who is enrolled and in what type of program.

She added that it would be important to look at outcomes – what is happening with children who are enrolled in high quality programs.

Ms. Ogawa responded to the excitement in the room and the opportunities resulting from the work of the Education Coordinating Council. She commended Ms. Fatima and Ms. Sparks for taking leadership and being open to doing things differently in providing services to children. Ms. Ogawa also recognized Mr. Sturm and Ms. Hottenroth for their early work and encouraged them to keep at it. And Ms. Ogawa gave a nod to Ms. Jean McIntosh from the Center for the Study of Social Policy for her work on merging early care and education with child welfare under the strengthening families model. Ms. Ogawa, as Board member of the Los Angeles County Education Foundation (LACEF), provided an update on the State bill they sponsored, SB 244 (Wright), which is now a two year bill. The intent of the bill is to be clear about priorities for child development services, particularly for vulnerable children under the auspices of the child welfare system or probation. The legislation clearly defines those most in need, how to make early care and education services accessible, and how the services may be navigated. The sponsors will return to the language and work through legislative process next year. Dr. Cohen stated his excitement about the legislation and his disappointment that it became a two year bill. On the other hand, it provides time to have discussions with potential stakeholders and make changes as they move forward.

Ms. Lee asked to have the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) involved in the conversations. She relayed that most of the homeless families receive CalWORKs. Mr. Dennis asked to what degree do DPSS and DCFS know that they are dealing with same clients, suggesting that there is possibility for synergy between the two Departments. Ms. Lee replied that they know in some instances, however with respect to homeless families it may be less the case. She agreed that there are ways for DCFS and DPSS to collaborate, yet with respect to homeless families DPSS has a role to play. DPSS will be on the agenda for the November meeting.

### **3. JOINT COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION REPORT**

#### **a. Update on State and Federal Legislation**

Mr. Adam Sonenshein directed members to the matrix containing the bills that resulted in action by the Governor. Of the 35 bills relating to early care and education, six bills made it to the Governor's desk. Of these bills, the Governor approved four and vetoed two. Excerpts from the veto messages are listed in the matrix and have to do with anticipated cost pressures to Proposition 98 General Fund. The Governor signed two bills of particular interest. AB 1368 (Adams) extends the same rules required of large family child care homes to small family child care homes, ensuring that one staff member trained in CPR is on site at all times. The second bill, SB 19 (Simitian), authorizes among other things the controversial issue of linking data to teacher evaluations. While early care and education provisions were dropped, this bill brings the State in alliance with potential funding opportunities under the ARRA, some of which will incorporate data relating to early care and education.

Mr. Sonenshein provided a brief update on the Early Learning Challenge Fund provision of the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2009 (H.R. 3221). The bill passed the House and is now in the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

## **b. Policy Framework**

*Identify opportunities for Los Angeles County to promote collaboration among service providers and advocates on behalf of needed legislative or regulatory changes.*

Mr. Sonenshein announced that the Joint Committee on Legislation, on behalf of the Roundtable and the Child Care Planning Committee, is planning to convene a meeting of stakeholders to brainstorm and prioritize common policy goals for 2010. The meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 8, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Hall of Administration in Room 739. The Joint Committee is currently working on the agenda for the meeting, and will prepare letters of invitation to go out within the next month.

## **4. COLLEAGUE AGENCY REPORTS**

### **a. Child Care Planning Committee (Planning Committee)**

Ms. Reynolds announced that the Planning Committee approved the guidelines for the temporary voluntary transfer of funds (TVTF) as directed by the California Department of Education to address under- and overearnings and keep allocated child development funds in Los Angeles County. The guidelines lay out how those dollars may be shared from one agency that cannot use funds to an agency that may be able to use funds. Ms. Malaske-Samu suggested a brief presentation on that process at the November meeting of the Roundtable. She added that it is the State's attempt to not lose state funds by allowing the transfer of funds between similar program types so that dollars may be retained within a county.

### **b. Commission for Children and Family Services**

No report.

### **c. First 5 LA**

Mr. Dennis reported on two major items: 1) First 5 LA is transitioning from an initiative driven process to a place-based approach, which will change how funding is allocated and used. One of the ways they are looking at this is by providing communities with the opportunity to build infrastructure. Program staff will provide the First 5 LA Commissioners the criteria at the November meeting for a vote. 2) First 5 LA is looking at a different governance structure. As background, the Commission has been in existence for ten years as a hybrid between government and nonprofit. Currently, the Commissioners are appointed by the Board of Supervisors and include County participation. First 5 LA will try to figure out a self governance approach with the assistance of a consultant the over next two months.

Mr. Dennis is working hard to express the interests of the Roundtable by ensuring that early care and education is an agenda item. He is the only person on the Commission that represents early care and education, serving as an ex-officio without voting rights. He encouraged members to lobby for a voting member. Dr. McCroskey announced that she will soon no longer participate on the First 5 LA Commission as The Children's Council of Los Angeles County representative given the change in their relationship with the County and their new governance structure. Dr. McCroskey appreciates the 10 years she served on the Commission, watching it grow to where it is today and its contribution to her learning. She echoed the comments of Mr. Dennis in that investments need to continue for children from birth to five that are not just health-related.

#### **d. Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP)**

Dr. Celia Ayala announced the following:

- Universal Preschool Conference and Education Expo is scheduled for October 16 and 17, 2009 at the Convention Center. Roundtable members are invited to participate for free due to a generous donation by BP.
- LAUP has submitted a proposal to the U.S. Department of Education for funding to work in partnership with the community colleges and universities to ensure training and education of early educators.
- The next meeting of the Early Learning Quality Improvement System Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, October 29, 2009 at the Yolo County Office of Education. Satellite sites will be set up across the state to allow broad participation. To learn about the locations and to RSVP, visit <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/sb1629committee.asp>.

#### **5. PUBLIC COMMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- LAUSD has partnered with LAUP and UCLA to implement a residency program for early care and education students. The students will earn stipends while working in early childhood programs primarily located in the Hollywood area.
- LAUSD has received official notice of its Title 1 funds under the ARRA. Some of the funds will be used to expand STEP participation to 40 more sites, paying for the UCLA Center for Improving Child Care Quality observations and review of the programs.

#### **6. CALL TO ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

##### **Commissioners Present:**

Dr. Celia C. Ayala  
Ms. Maria Calix  
Mr. Duane Dennis  
Ms. Ann Franzen  
Mr. Whit Hayslip  
Ms. Kathy House  
Ms. Charlotte Lee  
Dr. Jacquelyn McCroskey  
Ms. Terri Chew Nishimura  
Ms. Holly Reynolds  
Ms. Arlene Rhine  
Ms. Esther Torrez  
Ms. Mika Yamamoto  
Ms. Sarah Younglove

##### **Guests:**

Mr. John Berndt, Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE)  
Ms. Karen Blakely, First 5 LA  
Dr. Richard Cohen  
Ms. Maryam Fatima, Department of Children and Family Services  
Mr. Michael Gray, Department of Children and Family Services  
Ms. Emily Harding Morick, UCLA Center for Improving Child Care Quality  
Ms. Jennifer Hottenroth, Department of Children and Family Services  
Ms. Jean McIntosh, Center for the Study of Social Policy  
Dr. Carrie Miller, Education Coordinating Council  
Ms. Terry Ogawa  
Ms. Mary Picone, LACOE Head Start  
Ms. Kate Sachnoff, First 5 LA  
Mr. Adam Sonenshein, Los Angeles Universal Preschool  
Mr. Steve Sturm, Department of Children and Family Services

##### **Staff:**

Ms. Helen Chavez  
Ms. Kathleen Malaske-Samu  
Ms. Michele Sartell